



JOHN FELICE
ROME
CENTER

ENVS 227R

Ecology of the Mediterranean Sea

Rome—Fall 2019

Instructor: Marcello Di Paola, Ph.D.

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Class Meetings: Thursday 9.30-12.30

Office Hours: Thursdays 12.30-14.00

Core Area Satisfied:

Knowledge area: Scientific literacy

Skill: Critical Thinking Skills and Dispositions

Values Area: Promoting Civic Engagement or Leadership

Course Description:

Surrounded by Europe, Asia and Africa, the Mediterranean Sea has been for millennia a crossroads for markedly different value systems, economic objectives, political regimes, and religions. The Mediterranean is a hotspot of bio- as well as cultural diversity. The ecological and historical peculiarity of the region make it a great case study for better understanding the constant interactions and feedbacks between natural and human systems as these have shaped the cultural landscapes of the region.

That interaction - between ecology and anthropology, particularly the anthropology of Greek and Roman civilizations - is the central topic of this course. Students get acquainted with fundamental ecological concepts - including ecosystem functioning, energy flow and matter transformation, food chains and elemental cycles - and learn to locate the reality of these concepts in the natural and cultural history of the region.

The course also has a significant applied component centered on onsite activities with edible and other plants.* This aspect of the course is meant to bring to life the ecological processes and systems, and human practices and cultural geography studied in the course



by stimulating ecological and cultural intimacy with the Mediterranean, thus going beyond the mere transmission and absorption of abstract concepts.

* Organized by the cultural association Minima Urbana (www.minimaurbana.com) at a urban agriculture farm that promotes social inclusion through organic agriculture (www.iltrattore.it)

Learning Objectives:

This course provides students with ecological, historical and anthropological knowledge of the environment, ecosystems and landscapes of the Mediterranean. A further objective of the course is to promote critical thinking and environmental awareness.

Through this course, student should gain the following competencies:

Demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental principles, concepts and knowledge of the ecological sciences.

Demonstrate an understanding of the interconnection among various components of Earth's biosphere and human activity.

Demonstrate the capacity to make reasoned and ethical judgments about the impact of human activities on ecosystems and vice-versa.

Textbooks and readings:

TXTB Hughes, J. D. 2014 *Environmental Problems of the Greeks and the Romans. Ecology in the Ancient Mediterranean*. Johns Hopkins University Press

COMPL Blondel et al. 2010 (2nd ed.) *The Mediterranean Region Biological Diversity in Space and Time*, Oxford University Press.

COMPL Di Paola, M. 2017. *Ethics and Politics of the Built Environment*. Springer International Publishing.

COMPL Harari, Y.N. 2011. *Sapiens*, Vintage Books

COMPL Diamond, J. 2005 (3rd ed.) *Guns, Germs and Steel*, Norton Publishing.

SUGG Giesecke, A. 2007. *The Epic City*, Harvard University Press

Attendance Policy

In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy:

- For all classes meeting once a week, students cannot incur more than one unexcused absence.
- For all classes meeting twice a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.
- For all classes meeting three times a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.

This course meets once a week, thus a total of one (1) unexcused absence will be permitted. **Unexcused absences beyond this will result in 1% lowering of your final course grade, for every absence after the “approved limit”.**

Course Evaluation:

Your grade in the course will be based on:

- 20% Class participation, reflection and discussions
- 25% Group presentation (Project Outline)
- 25% Group presentation (Project Completed)
- 30% Group Research Paper

Classroom participation and discussions (20%)

This is a very important part of the course. As a matter of minimal compliance, students will need to have done the reading and activities ahead of time for class. As a matter of reflective academic creativity, they will need to engage in informed and critical group dialogues and discussions.

These are assessed in light of the following criteria:

1. Relevance: Is the question/comment/objection relevant and useful to a productive and instructive discussion?
2. Evidence: Does the student support the question/comment/objection well, using material gathered in this class and making clear reference to passages in the readings?
3. Clarity: Is the question/comment/objection clear, complete and concise?
4. Intellectual cleverness: does the question/comment/objection shed additional light into the key variables determining the topic at hand?



5. Adequacy: Is the question/comment/objection pertinent and adequate to the subject matter?
6. Implications: does the analysis of the issue being raised broaden its scope to detect further implications conducive to a better definition of any of the existing models?

Group presentation Project Outline (25%)

Students will divide into groups of 3. Each group will prepare a presentation on a selected part of Rome where interactions between ecology and culture, of any kind, are distinctively significant. In the presentation, students will outline a research project of their own devising and discuss it with the instructor and peers.

External research is required, as are independent visits to the area selected and the use of scientific articles to explain the more general interest of the case study for the course.

Presentations should be at least 20 minutes long, and the presenting group will then engage in Q&A (the latter also counting towards the participation grade of each member of the audience).

Group presentation Project Completed (25%)

At the end of the term, groups will present their completed research projects to the class.

Group Research Paper (30%)

The groups will produce a 2000-2500 words research paper that expands on, and formalizes in professional academic style, their research project as previously presented in class.

Grading:

Final letter grades will be calculated as follow, based on the cumulative percentage from the tasks described above:

A: 94-100	A-: 90-93	
B+: 87-89	B: 83-86	B-: 80-82
C+: 77-79	C: 73-76	C-: 70-72
D+: 65-69	D: 60-64	F: <60



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Course Outline:

Session 1 September 5 2019

Introduction to the course and statements of expectations

The Birth of the Mediterranean: geology and evolution

Blondel et al., ch. 1

Session 2 September 12 2019

Humans as Sculptors of Mediterranean Landscapes

Blondel et al., ch. 10

Session 3 September 19 2019

Domestication and Agriculture

Harari, ch. 5

Diamond, ch. 4-8

Session 4 September 26 2019

Onsite Activity - Museo delle Civiltà: Mediterranean cultures and popular traditions

Session 5 October 3 2019

Mediterranean Ecology (reprise) and Early Ecological Crises

Hughes, ch.1-4

Session 6 October 10

Presentations Projects Outlines



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OCTOBER 17 FALL BREAK/NO CLASS

Session 7 October 24

Using Nature

Hughes, ch. 5-6

Session 8 October 25

Problems

Hughes, ch. 7-10

Session 9 October 31

Problems II

Hughes, ch. 12- 14

Session 10 November 7 2019

Onsite Activity - Work and Refuge: gardens and urban sanctuaries

Hughes, ch. 11

Session 11 November 14 2019

Onsite Activity – Novel Ecosystems



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Session 12 November 21 2019

Onsite Activity - Challenges for the Future of the Mediterranean

Blondel et al., ch 13

NOVEMBER 28 THANKSGIVING RECESS/NO CLASS

Session 13 December 5 2019

Onsite activity: Urban Food and Urban Spaces

Session 14 December 7-12 2019

Presentations and Final Paper Submissions

Academic Honesty:

Clear explanations of academic integrity at Loyola University of Chicago are provided at:

<http://www.luc.edu/education/resources/academic-policies/academic-integrity/>

These policies will be enforced in this course and breaking them will automatically lead to zero points for the assessment task in question. I reserve the right to impose more severe penalties, including a grade of 'F' for the entire course. All breaches of the policy will be reported to your Dean's office. For additional academic policies and procedures refer to:

http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_main.shtml

Accessibility:

Students who have disabilities which they believe entitle them to accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act should register with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) office. To request accommodations, students must schedule an appointment with an SSWD coordinator. Students should contact SSWD at least four weeks before their first semester or term at Loyola. Returning students should schedule an appointment within the first two weeks of the semester or term. The University policy on accommodations and participation in courses is available at: <http://www.luc.edu/sswd/>



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Harassment (Bias Reporting):

It is unacceptable and a violation of university policy to harass, discriminate against or abuse any person because of his or her race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. Such behavior threatens to destroy the environment of tolerance and mutual respect that must prevail for this university to fulfill its educational and health care mission. For this reason, every incident of harassment, discrimination or abuse undermines the aspirations and attacks the ideals of our community. The university qualifies these incidents as incidents of bias.

In order to uphold our mission as a Jesuit Catholic University—a diverse community seeking God in all things and working to expand knowledge in the service of humanity through learning, justice and faith—any incident(s) of bias must be reported and appropriately addressed.

Therefore, the Bias Response (BR) Team was created to assist members of the Loyola University Chicago community in bringing incidents of bias to the attention of the university. If you believe you are subject to such bias, you should notify the Bias Response Team at this link: <http://webapps.luc.edu/biasreporting/>