ENVS 227R Ecology of the Mediterranean Sea
Spring 2020
Thursdays | 9 am - 12 pm
Dr. Marcello Di Paola
Email: mdipaola@luc.edu
Office Hours: Thursdays, 12 pm – 1 pm

Course Description:
Sitting amidst today’s Europe, Northern Africa and the Middle East, the Mediterranean region is a hotspot of bio- as well as cultural diversity, and one of the cradles of human civilization. A bit of the planet that has been soon and densely humanized, through the centuries and millennia the Mediterranean region has hosted as well as undergone long and complex ecological and historical transformations. These have included the emergence and domestication of a vast number of species, some of which have proven crucial to the material and immaterial culture of Western civilization and indeed humanity as a whole; as well as well as the morphing and expressions of sophisticated, cross-fertilized and yet often conflicting human systems - of values, symbols, political organization, religion, and economic production and exchange.

The coexistence and interaction of species and cultures have sculpted Mediterranean environments, ecosystems, landscapes and biomes. 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 integrity and functioning, food chains, and elemental cycles - and learn to locate the reality of these concepts in the natural and cultural history of the region.

Learning Objectives:
This course provides students with ecological, historical and anthropological knowledge of the environments, ecosystems and landscapes of the Mediterranean region. It also promotes a nuanced understanding of the depths and complexities of long-term interactions and feedbacks between natural and human systems. This is important in times of great anthropogenic ecological transformations such as ours. In this respect, the Mediterranean region offers, and in this course is treated as, a grand and especially instructive case-study of global relevance.

Students will gain:
- an understanding of fundamental principles, concepts and methods of the ecological sciences;
- an understanding of the interconnections and recursive interactions between ecologies and anthropologies;
- a capacity to make reasoned judgments regarding current ecological trends and anthropogenic transformations.

Textbooks and readings:


Students are required to purchase (Hughes 2014). All other readings will be made available by the instructor.

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 readings and assignments ahead of time for class. As a matter of reflective academic engagement and constructive participation, they will need to engage in informed and critical class 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. Each group will prepare a presentation on a major topic in Mediterranean ecology and environmental history, selecting from a roster of options provided by the instructor. In the presentation, students will outline a research project entirely of their own devising and discuss it with the instructor and peers.

External research is required, particularly 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.

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 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**
94-100: A
90-93: A-
87-89: B+
84-86: B
80-83: B-
77-79: C+
74-76: C
70-73: C-
67-69: D+
60-66: D
59 or lower: F

**Academic Honesty**
Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable at the JFRC and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago’s guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola’s standards here:


**Late or Missed Assignments**
Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization of the instructor.

**Accessibility Accommodations**
Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center requiring academic accommodations should contact the Office of the Dean at the John Felice Rome Center, the first week of classes.

**Course Outline:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 1</th>
<th>Jan 23</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to the course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Birth of the Mediterranean: geology and evolution</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blondel et al., ch. 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 2</th>
<th>Jan 30</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Humans as Sculptors of Mediterranean Landscapes</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blondel et al., ch. 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 3</th>
<th>Feb 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visions of Nature and Early Ecological Crises</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hughes, ch. 1, 3, 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 4</th>
<th>Feb 13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Domestication and Agriculture</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harari, ch. 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Feb 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Feb 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>March 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>March 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>March 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>April 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session 11  April 9

Onsite Activity – Mediterranea: Globally Inclusive Urban Agriculture in Rome

Session 12  April 16

Challenges for the Future of the Mediterranean
Blondel et al., ch 13

Session 13  April 23

Reading Week and Review

Session 14  April 27-30

Presentations and Final Paper Submissions

General Comments:
The class will be centered around discussions of the topics listed on the syllabus. I will provide the scientific background for each topic, but student discussion and participation should lead to the greatest insight. Therefore, it is imperative that each student come to class prepared by having done the assigned activities for that day. This is an interactive class, students should feel free to ask questions and make comments about the material we are discussing.

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. If you believe you are subject to such bias, you should notify the Bias Response Team at this link: http://webapps.luc.edu/biasreporting/