Economic geography

PROF. MARIO A. MAGGIONI

Course aims and intended learning outcomes

The course, which is taught in English, aims at providing students with tools, models and methods useful to understand geo-economic phenomena with reference to the micro and macro economic analysis of the spatial component of the behaviours of consumers, firms and the functioning of markets and to the origin and effects of agglomeration, concentration and specialization. Special emphasis will be given to the knowledge of basic statistical indexes and to the analysis and critical evaluation of the main models available in the economic literature in the field. A discussion of recent empirical evidence of location dynamics and policy implications complement the course.

Intended Learning Outcomes (knowledge and understanding)
At the end of the course, by attending lectures and devoting time to study both individually and in small groups, the student will be able to discuss the driving engine of the location decisions of households and firms and describe their possible effects on the structure of cities and regions, to handle the main statistical indicators to assess the clustering phenomenon, to analyse the structure of international flows of both goods and factors within a globalised economy.

Intended Learning Outcomes (applying knowledge and understanding)
At the end of the course, by attending lectures and devoting time to study both individually and in small groups, the student will be able to identify and measure the industrial specialization of a given region and the regional concentration of a given industry, to apply different models, available in the literature, able to explain the emergence of clustering phenomena and agglomeration dynamics, to evaluate the role of different attractive and repulsive forces within a gravity model to explain the international flows of goods, investments and workers.

Course content

1. *What is Economic Geography*
   Issues and methods.

2. *Why Economic Geography Matters*
   Stylised Facts
   a. Location patterns of economic activities.
   b. Agglomeration: concentration and specialization.
   c. Globalization: interregional and international flows.

3. *Models*
   a. Classical Location Theory.
   b. New Economic Geography.
   c. Path Dependence.

4. *Empirical Evidence.*

5. *Policy Implications.*

Reading list

The course programme is covered by
– Lecture Notes.
– Lecture Slides.
– Hyperlinks to websites with models simulations.

The following textbooks may be considered as extensive background reading, while specific relevant sections will be highlighetd through the Blackboard platform:

S. BRAKMAN-H GARRETSEN-C. VAN MARREWIJK, The New Introduction to Geographical Economics, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2009.

N. COE-P. KELLY-H.W.C. YEUNG, Economic Geography: A Contemporary Introduction, Wileym, New York, 2013.

P. MCCANN, Modern and Regional Economics, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2013.

Further detailed references will be given during lectures.

Teaching method

Lectures, Seminars, Groupworks.

Assessment method and criteria

The exam is a written paper – administered through during official dates (appelli) – composed by multiple choice questions (accounting for 40% of the final mark) and open questions (accounting for 60% of the final mark). The final score will be expressed out of thirty points and will take account of the student's level of understanding, knowledge, use of the appropriate tools and ability to discuss themes and topics covered in lectures. Active participation in seminars and groupworks may grant some extra points.

Exact dates will be displayed on the I-catt portal

Oral exam is not compulsory; students may ask for an oral exam, that can improve or worsen the grade received on the written test. Teachers may also invite students, with a grade slightly below "pass" level, to sit a oral exam.

Notes and prerequisites

Economic Courses requires student firstly to understand and secondly to study. Students are strongly advised to attend lectures, to study the content on a weakly basis and to take active parts in every side activity put forward by the instructor. Students will find more easy to learn when studying in small group.

The Blackboard platform provides the main online communication tool between lecturers and students and the repository for didactic materials made available after lectures. It is recommended the student to be familiar with the basic notion and tools of microeconomic analysis.

Place and time of consultation hours

Students are welcome to contact Prof. Mario A. Maggioni at DISEIS - Dipartimento di Economia Internazionale, delle Istituzioni e dello Sviluppo (Via Necchi 5, fifth floor, room 513). Weekly "question time" is usually every Monday (16.30 - 18.00); exceptions are signalled in advance on the lecturer's webpage. The Instructor is also generally available for short conversations at the end of all lectures.