**Agricultural and Food Economics and Policy**

Prof. Stefano Boccaletti; Prof. Claudio Soregaroli

**Module 1 - Agri-Food Chain and System**

Prof. Stefano Boccaletti

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to describe the main problems and organisation of the agri-food system, in order to understand how the characteristics of a final food are the result of the strategies implemented at different stages, the forms of coordination adopted, and the policies undertaken.

The course intends to integrate the knowledge of economics and industrial organisation in the evaluation and definition of the strategies necessary to increase the competitiveness of agri-food chains.

At the end of the course, students will have acquired the tools necessary for a critical evaluation of the agri-food *supply chain* and of the forms of coordination and *governance* between the various levels, with the aim of identifying their strengths and weaknesses and suggesting any changes in order to achieve greater overall efficiency.

***COURSE CONTENT***

*The agri-food system:* relationships between its components, information technologies.

*Demand for agri-food products:* dynamics of food consumption, new consumption patterns, demand for quality and safety.

*Distribution:* evolution of food distribution in Italy, dominant types of business, strategies.

*The food industry:* structural features of the Italian food industry, strategies of SMEs and large companies, innovation.

*Agriculture:* weakness of the primary sector, industrialisation of agriculture, agricultural cooperation.

*Market power, coordination and integration:* monopoly and monopsony, vertical relationships in the presence of market power, vertical integration, contracts.

***READING LIST***

For each topic covered, the lecturer will provide reading references and supplementary material during the course.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Theoretical lectures in the classroom are carried out with the aid of computer presentations.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The exam is structured in two parts: an oral presentation of the results of a project carried out in groups, and a final written exam.

Group-work. Students have to form small work groups. Each group will carry out a sectoral analysis, the aim of which is to identify the main competitive forces and strategies that characterise the sector by applying the theoretical notions learned to a real situation.

Final written exam. The exam has a total duration of 120 minutes. Questions cover both the more descriptive parts of the course and the more strictly methodological parts; in the latter case, students are explicitly requested to respond using graphs and/or simple proofs. The marks attributed to the individual questions may vary depending on the test. Taken as a whole, the assessment aims to provide a sufficiently precise measure of the student's overall level of preparation on the entire course programme, and to help the lecturer understand both the student's reasoning ability and his/her mastery of the methodological tools in interpreting the real economic phenomena characterising the agri-food chain.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

To understand the topics covered, a basic knowledge of the tools of micro-economic analysis is required.

Information on office hours available on the teacher's personal page at <http://docenti.unicatt.it/>.

**Module on 2 - European Food and Agricultural Policies**

CLAUDIO SOREGAROLI

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course intends to introduce students to the contents of European Union policies affecting the agri-food sector, analysing their objectives, tools and impact. Particular emphasis will be placed on the microeconomic aspects (impact on prices and markets; impact on the well-being of producers, consumers and taxpayers) and the effects on the operations of agri-food companies.

At the end of the course, students will be able to critically analyse European agri-food policies, both in general economic policy terms and in terms of their impact on business operations and the welfare of end consumers. They will also be able to examine cases of policy application referring to specific products and markets.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course will cover the main agri-food policies of the European Union, analysing their historical evolution, objectives, tools and effects. The course will cover the following topics:

1. The significance of agri-food policies within the European integration process.
2. The decision-making mechanisms of the European Union and the Community budget.
3. The international context in which European agri-food policies are developed: the role of the WTO and trade agreements.
4. EU agricultural policies: the Common Agricultural Policy, its evolution and its economic significance. The transition from market price support policies to direct aid to companies. The evolution of the methods of direct aid to companies.
5. Food policies: food safety and food quality policies. Specific policies relating to traceability, labelling, health and nutritional claims, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), products with geographical indications (PDO, PGI, TSG), organic farming, voluntary certifications, sustainable consumption, and sustainable packaging.

***READING LIST***

Core text:

A. Oskam - G. Meester - H. Silvis, *EU policy for agriculture, food and rural areas*, Wageningen Academic Publishers, Wageningen, The Netherlands, 2010.

F, Sotte, *La politica Agricola europea: Storia e analisi*, Firenze University Press, Firenze, Italy, 2023.

Further readings will be indicated during the course, with particular reference to the documentation published on European Union websites.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course is based on lectures and case analyses relating to the application of specific agri-food policies. The lectures make use of computer presentations, which will be made available to students.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The final grade for the course is computed as follows:

Case study presentation (group work) 10/30

Project work (group work) 4.5/30

Final exam (individual) 15.5/30

The case studies presented in class concern specific aspects of EU policies that are relevant for the program of the module and for which stakeholders might have contrasting positions. The project work will involve the study of concrete cases of how EU policies impact on the strategic marketing choices made by agri-food companies in relation to certain specific products.

Evaluation of in-class presentations will be based on:

1. Strength of the analysis (extent of the analysis, ability to stress the relevant points and address specific questions);
2. Communication skills (clarity and effectiveness of the presentation);
3. Ability to generate discussion.

Evaluation of group work will be the same for all group members. Students can decide if to participate to the group work or not. For those students not participating to group works, the final exam will weight 100% on the overall mark for the module.

The final written exam lasts a maximum of 90 minutes and comprises multiple choice and open-ended questions. The questions cover both the more descriptive parts of the course as well as those of economic policy analysis. The marks attributed to the individual questions may vary depending on the test. The assessment aims to provide a sufficiently precise measure of the student's overall level of preparation with respect to the whole course programme, and to help the lecturer understand both the student's reasoning ability and his/her mastery of economic analyses of agri-food policies.

The final exam can be provided also in electronic form using the Blackboard platform. To be considered for final grade computation, the final exam needs to reach a score of at least 8 points over 15.5.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

To understand the topics covered, a basic knowledge of the graphical tools of microeconomic analysis is required.

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