

41030 - History of Pandemics: crisis and society
Academic year 2024/25

Instructors:

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The objective of the course is to provide a systematic analysis of the impact of major crises of a pandemic nature on societies and economic systems. In the context of the recent Covid-19 crisis, it has become clear that looking at previous historical experiences is necessary in order to imagine possible scenarios concerning the development of ongoing health threats in situations of high uncertainty. Beyond this, a growing body of social science research has been arguing for the ability of major pandemics to produce significant and very long-lasting social and economic consequences. The course offers a systematic analysis of the characteristics and the consequences of major pandemics, from the medieval Black Death (with hints at even earlier episodes) to Covid-19. The course is aimed at providing the students with: 1) a deeper understanding of how major crises are able to deeply affect societies; 2) a general knowledge of the tools (including the statistical tools) used to explore the spread and the socio-demographic impact of epidemics and pandemics; 3) the ability to draw appropriate and relevant historical comparisons when pursuing the study of modern-day health threats of a pandemic nature.

Course grades will be based on a **final written exam**, based on the lectures and the compulsory readings of the course.