

Arctic Studies Programme 2026

Proposed Lecture Topics and Abstracts

Please note: The order of lectures may not correspond to the timetable order.

Academic coordinator: Anna Stammler-Gossmann

***ASPB Introduction to the Arctic* 5 ECTS**

Principal tutor: Nuccio Mazzullo

Title of the lecture	Introduction to the Arctic Societies North as space and place (2 hours)
Teacher	Anna Stammler-Gossmann
Main content	The aim of the lecture is to examine different definitions of the Arctic/North from representational viewpoint – concepts, images, discourses, views. The introduction gives also an overview of theoretical paradigms in Arctic studies on societies (indigeneity – who is indigenous? sustainable development – what does it mean on the local, regional, national level?; vulnerability in the ‘translated context’, resilience, adaptation) and local concepts of space and human-nature-land relations
Key words	Space definitions and concepts; where and what is the Arctic? Homeland and frontier; indigenous people, indigeneity; Social life of climate change models; Concepts of sustainability, vulnerability, resilience, adaptation, circularity

Title of the lecture	Living in the cold: Rendered spaces and lived places (2 hours)
Teacher	Anna Stammler-Gossmann
Main content	The lecture is based on case studies conducted in different Arctic regions. It explores spaces and places represented, sensed and experienced as a part of everyday practices, local and regional perspectives, and as affiliated national discourses. It looks at human adaptation to winter in northern communities, practical applications of coldness, uses of winter, environmental changes and northern economies. The lecture focuses on the complexity of how a place may be sensed and anchor human lives despite the seeming tension between physical environmental settings and meanings.
Key words	Arctic communities; sense of place, uses and perception of cold; environmental changes; climate change, anthropology of disaster (flooding), matter of risk, circular bioeconomy, northern economies (pastoralism, fisheries, tourism)

Title of the lecture	Introduction to the Arctic and Boreal nature (2 hours)
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Teacher	Bruce Forbes
Main content	General classification/types/distribution maps of Arctic/Boreal areas Differences between Arctic and Antarctic areas Special features of Arctic and Boreal areas; including physical characteristics, vegetation, and typical animal species Taiga forests; differences between natural and managed forests Threats of arctic/boreal fauna; including climate change Overview of the adaptation methods
Key words	Arctic; Boreal; Nature; Species; Threats; Climate change

Title of the lecture	Natural resources in the northern areas (2 hours)
Teacher	Florian Stammmler
Main content	Distribution and use of Arctic and Boreal natural resources. This lecture will give an overview of natural resources in the circumpolar Arctic, including resources on the surface and under the surface of the land. We find out about the dominant extractive industries in the different Arctic areas as well as the renewable natural resources that the human inhabitants of the Arctic use in their livelihoods. The focus in the lecture is on the ways in which these natural resources are meaningful or problematic for human life in the Arctic, as well as their significance beyond the Arctic for the rest of the planet. This will inform an understanding of the significance of the Arctic for broader global developments.
Key words	Natural resources (oil, gas, minerals, wind, timber, fish, etc.) Conflicts between different land use practices

Title of the lecture	Excursion to Ounasvaara and Visit to the exhibition of the Pilke (8 hours)
Teacher	Jukka Jokimäki & Marja-Liisa Kaisanlahti-Jokimäki
Main content	Natural history and use of arctic and boreal environments; Natural history of Rovaniemi/Ounasvaara; forestry and recreational use of boreal environments; boreal forest types and tree species
Literature	
Key words	Arctic; Boreal; Nature; Species; Threats; Climate change

Title of the lecture	Governing the Arctic (2 hours)
Teacher	Marlene Payva Almonte
Main content	The Arctic is not an empty space but home to a myriad of people, species and ecosystems . This lecture introduces the students to the Arctic, its biodiversity and its peoples and to some of the challenges the region as well as its governance face.
Key words	Arctic governance

Title of the lecture	Arctic and Antarctic Information Resources (1 hour)
Teacher	Vuontisjärvi Kati
Main content	Where to find information on Arctic and Antarctic issues? Where to find maps on Arctic and Antarctic? Where to find information on indigenous peoples?
Literature	
Key words	Arctic and Antarctic literature, scientific information, information on indigenous peoples

Title of the lecture	Land use in Sámiland (2 hours)
Teacher	Nuccio Mazzullo
Main content	The lecture aims to give a brief overview, from an anthropological perspective, of land use issues related to Sámi reindeer herding and other practices in Sámiland, with a particular focus on a forestry-reindeer herding case study in Finnish Sámiland.
Key words	Reindeer herding, forestry, Sámi rights, traditional livelihood, land-use conflicts

ASPB Arctic Ecosystems and Adaptation of Species to Arctic Environment 5 ECTS

Principal tutor Sari Stark

Title of the lecture (30 hours)	Tundra and boreal forest ecosystems (6 h)
Teacher	Bruce Forbes
Main content	The evolution and distribution of tundra and boreal forest ecosystems, emphasizing vegetation, plant–animal interactions and natural and anthropogenic disturbance patterns and processes
Key words	Ecosystems, vegetation, plant-animal interactions, anthropogenic disturbance
Title of the lecture	Marine productivity and biodiversity (3 h)
Teacher	Sari Stark
Main content	Introduction to Arctic oceanography and sea life from the microscopic plankton to the large mammals, processes and global interactions affecting marine productivity and biodiversity, changes in sea ice and how they impact organisms and processes in the Arctic Ocean
Key words	Marine productivity, marine biodiversity, marine ecosystems

Title of the lecture	Natural Selection and Adaptation of Endothermic Vertebrate Animals to Northern Environment (6 h)
Teacher	Osmo Rätti
Main content	Evolution and the theory of natural selection, morphological and behavioural adaptations of animals
Key words	Evolution, Natural selection, Adaptation

Title of the lecture	Physiological Adaptation of Endothermic Animals to Northern Environment (6 h)
Teacher	Päivi Soppela
Main content	Physiological and morphological adaptations of endothermic animals to northern environment; temperature regulation, cold adaptation, energy expenditure, hibernation, adipose tissues/fats, visual adaptation, reindeer, humans, climate change
	Northern environment, cold climate, season, animals, adaptation, energy, thermogenesis, fats, brown fat
Title of the lecture	Adaptation of plants to northern environment (3 h)
Teacher	Minna Turunen
Main content	Morphological and physiological adaptations of plants to northern environment; responses and adaptations of plants to climate change
Key words	Northern environment, vegetation zone, plant, adaptation, timberline, climate change
Title of the lecture	Snow in changing climate (6 h)
Teacher	Leena Leppänen, Sirpa Rasmus
Main content	Characteristics and evolution of seasonal snow cover, snow in changing climate, and role of snow as a part of the environment. Includes practicing snow measurements outside.

ASPB Arctic Governance and Law 5 ECTS

Principal tutor: Punam Noor

Title of the lecture	International Environmental Law in the Arctic (8 hours)
Teacher	Marlene Payva Almonte
Main content	• Significance of Environmental Law in the Arctic • International Law and Environment • International Environmental Law: Law making process • Basic Principles of International Environmental Law • Reference to international regulations (and cases) applicable to the Arctic • International Law and International Environmental Law from a critical perspective
Key words	International environmental law, principles of environmental law, treaties and framework convention, Arctic, indigenous peoples, human rights, biodiversity, marine environment.

Title of the lecture	International Climate Change Law and the Arctic (8 hours)
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Teacher	Noor Punam
Main content	- Objectives, Methods and Principles of International Climate Change Law - Phases of the UN Climate Regime, Compliance and Enforcement in the Climate Change Regime - Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement and the obligations of Arctic states towards them - Arctic Indigenous peoples' participation in shaping International Climate Change Law
Literature	- Bodansky, D., Brunnee, J. & Rajamani, L (2017). International Climate Change Law. Oxford: OUP. Chapters 2, 5 and 7. - Maguire, R (2013). Foundations of International Climate Law. In Erkki J Hollo, Kati Kulovesi & Michael Mehling (Eds.) Climate Change and the Law. Springer. <u>Mayer</u> Benoit (2018)<i>The International Law on Climate Change</i>, Cambridge University Press. Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 7.
Key words	Arctic, climate change, indigenous peoples, human rights, participation

Title of the lecture	International Law of the Sea in the Arctic (2 hours)
Teacher	Noor Punam
Main content	The history of the international law of the sea and its codification. The contemporary legal regime governing maritime areas in the Arctic, in particular the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (LOSC); maritime boundary delimitation, the rules governing different maritime zones, navigational rights and freedoms, protection and preservation of marine environment and IMO Conventions.
Key words	law of the sea, Arctic, coastal states, navigational rights, marine pollution

Title of the lecture	Arctic cooperation and resource governance (6 hours)
Teacher	Marco Volpe
Main content	- Overview of the post-Cold War history and of the current status of Arctic politics and the regionalisation process - The institutions of Arctic cooperation and their modes of functioning (focus on the Arctic Council and regional law-making processes). - Actors in Arctic regional politics. - Multilevel governance of Arctic resource extraction

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Key words	Arctic, Arctic Council, cooperation, Barents, politics, governance, resources

ASPB People, Cultures and Identities of the Arctic 5 ECTS

Principal tutor: Nuccio Mazzullo

Title of the lecture	Of reindeer herding, place and people: issues of perception among Finnish Northern Sámi	
Teacher	Nuccio Mazzullo	
Main content	The lecture shall explore, from an anthropological perspective, issues of identity and indigeneity among the Sámi people. It shall be an ethnographic account of herding, migration and social changes among the Sámi people of Finnish Lapland in order to illustrate the importance of reindeer herding to this day as a subsistence that goes beyond economic analyses and that calls for a more holistic approach. Despite a weakened economic importance, reindeer herding still plays a very important role in the social and cultural dimensions of Sámi society.	
Key words	Perception, traditional livelihoods, place and place-making	
Title of the lecture	Cultural Changes among the Skolt Sami, especially in forms of livelihood and in relations to natural resources	
Teacher	Panu Itkonen	
Main content	The lecture describes changes in Skolt Sami forms of livelihood during last hundred years. Moreover, the lecture analyzes changes in Skolt Sami people's relation to nature and natural resources.	
Key words	Notions of Northernness/Arcticness, identity building in arctic Russia	
Title of the lecture	Greenland: challenges of a changing world.	
Teacher	Heidi Kontinen	

Main content	A general introduction about Greenland, geography and history will be followed by a summary about the several changes impacting arctic communities. Climate fluctuations and changes contribute to affect traditional activities e.g. hunting which in turn may affect culture and identity; Economic activities and the search for alternatives like tourism and natural resources give way to a vivid debate amid the society, in turn experiencing changes, like urban versus rural. Taking into account also the demographic changes the seminar aims at linking the different aspects in order to stimulate a discussion, comparison and suggestions.
Literature	2022: The Dog-Hunter Alliance in two Hunting Communities of Greenland. Journal of Arctic Studies, 5, P. 272-300. ISBN 978-7-5426-7796-9. 2020: Impact of Climate and Economic Changes of Inuit's Traditional Hunting. On the Basis of Research of Greenlandic Peripheral Communities. Journal of Guangxi University for Nationalities. Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition: 17-29. ISSN 1673-8179; CN 45-1349/C 2019: Experiencing the Arctic: European and Chinese tourists in Greenland. A Comparative Study. Journal of Arctic Studies: 170-185. Arctic Studies Centre, Liaocheng University, Social Sciences Academic Press. ISSN 978-7-5201-5638-7 2012 : Le tourisme dans l'Arctique - Tourism in the Arctic. Études/Inuit/Studies, 36(2). ISSN: 0701-1008. (Guest editor) 2011: Tourism Experiences in the Peripheral North, Case Studies from Greenland. Monograph. Inussuk, Arctic Research Journal. Government of Greenland, Ministry of Education and Research, Nuuk, 2. https://naalakkersuisut.gl/~media/Nanoq/Files/Attached%20Files/Forskning/Inussuk/DK%20og%20ENG/inussuk%202%202011.pdf
Key words	Greenland; changes; economics and socio-cultural aspects

Title of the lecture	People and the land in the Arctic
Teacher	Florian Stammmler
Main content	It is no secret that land is the key resource for Arctic indigenous peoples to continue their livelihoods forming the base of Arctic cultures. However, only few if any indigenous peoples had formal ownership of their land before they had to defend their rights to incoming people who advanced intensive land use in the Arctic. This lecture(s) introduces some key examples of indigenous perceptions of land rights, land use practices and cooperation among different indigenous users of the same land. In these examples, rather than a notion of formal ownership, the entitlements of people to the land base on knowing its resources and the cooperation in engaging with them in daily practice. Using a case-study approach from the Yamal-Nenets, the Yakutian Evenki, and the Kamchatkan Eveny with some comparative outlook to the Norwegian Lule-Sámi, we shall explore together the multiple layers that lie behind current notions of land ownership in the Arctic.
Key words	Indigenous, land rights, issues of ownership and cooperation

Title of the lecture	Sámi spiritual beliefs, art, traditions and practices
Teacher	Francis Joy
Main content	The aims of the lecture are to examine the role and function art plays in relation to an embedded knowledge system, which is representative of identity, culture and cultural memory, through an examination of different art forms and landscapes.
Key words	Art, embedded knowledge system, identity, culture, cultural memory

Title of the lecture	Cultures, identities and peoples of Siberia and the Russian North
Teacher	Stephan Dudeck
Main content	The lecture deals with the history of the category of the Small Numbered Indigenous Peoples of the Russian North, Siberia and the Far East in Czarist Russia, the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia. We will have a look into the main forms of nature use in the Russian Arctic - reindeer herding, fishing, extractive industries etc. The lecture gives an overview of the main branches of economy but also cultural practices like religion, oral traditions and languages among Siberian peoples. It will provide an historic overview of the colonisation of the Russian North from military conquest through scientific exploration to industrial development.
Key words	Economy, religion, oral traditions, languages, Siberian peoples

Title of the lecture	Sámi handicraft and communities of practice
Teacher	Nuccio Mazzullo
Main content	The lecture will address issues of learning and sharing of practices of making handicraft among the Sámi. We shall compare with other systems of learning and with the influences of tourism and mass production. We shall also address the differences between the notion of handicraft and that of art.
Key words	Situated learning, handicraft, cognitivism, handicraft and arts

Seminar	Group presentations on four different themes
Teacher	Nuccio Mazzullo <i>et al.</i>
Main Themes	• Worldview in the Arctic: religion, belief, shamanism • Knowledge, knowledge systems and traditional subsistence activities. • Different discourses on the concept of indigeneity • Issues of identity, Space and Territoriality
Literature	Course literature
Key words	Team-work, presentation skills, synthesis skills.

ASPB Human Rights and Security in the Arctic 5 ECTS**Principal tutor: Dele Raheem**

Title of the lecture	Introduction to Human Rights and Human Security in the Arctic (8 h)
Teacher	Marlene Payva-Almonte
Main content	Arctic governance and international law, global and local threats to human security in the Arctic, human rights obligations
Key words	Arctic governance, security, safety, human rights

Title of the lecture	Food Resilience and Sovereignty in the Arctic (9 h)
Teacher	Dele Raheem
Main content	In this lecture we will explore why the food system need to change, understand the relationship between climate change, agriculture and food security. What does food sovereignty entail in the Arctic context? What is the common language between policy makers, academics, and grassroots activists towards resilience and food security. The lecture will include a field trip to a food processing unit (6 h)
Key words	food security, food safety, nutrition, climate change, food, sustainability

Title of the lecture	Human security: questions concerning connectivity and digitalization (4h).
Teacher	Juha Saunavaara
Main content	This lecture approaches questions concerning human security in the Arctic from the perspective of connectivity, telecommunications, and cybersecurity. Issues to be discussed include but are not limited to: planning and construction of telecommunications/digital infrastructure importance of digital services, digital divide, and special challenges related to Arctic environmental conditions and long distances.
Key words	Human security, telecommunications, digitalization, connectivity

Title of the lecture	Introduction to Cultural Heritage Law and Heritage rights of Russian Arctic communities (6 hs)
Teacher	Karolina Sikora
Main content	The lecture will address the basics of international cultural heritage law and explore the issue of human rights approach to cultural heritage. The theoretical discussion will be put in the context of rights to heritage of Russian Arctic communities
Key words	international cultural heritage law, indigenous rights, human rights dimension of heritage

Optional courses 0-13**ASPB Optional course 5 ECTS**

Indigenous (Sámi) spirituality and religious beliefs (16 h + fieldwork)

Principal tutor: Francis Joy

Title of Lecture	Lecture 1. The Sámi sacrificial tradition past and present. (3 hours).
Teacher	Francis Joy
Main content	The roles and functions of holy places as encountered in historical literature during missionizing and from within contemporary culture
Key words	Sieidi, seita, bones, wooden posts, hunting, fishing, spirits

Title of the lecture	Lecture 2 Drum-time. Sámi shaman drums past and present. (3 h)
Teacher	Francis Joy
Main content	An examination of prehistoric rock art in Finland and Alta, Finnmark Norway and in what ways images within these sites appear to be related to Sámi cosmological landscapes painted n Sámi shaman drums from the seventeenth century.
Key words	Rock paintings, rock carvings, horns, triangular headed figures, cosmology, shamanism

Title of the lecture	Lecture 3. Rock art, Sámi shamanism and cosmology. (3 hours)
Teacher	Francis Joy
Main content	The emphasis on the lecture is to look at in what ways and by what means historical Sámi shaman drums and their content have influenced Sámi drum makers today.
Key words	Shaman drums, cosmological landscapes, divination, contemporary drums, Sámi artists

Title of the lecture	Lecture 4. Sámi cultural heritage and tourism in Finland. (3 hours)
Teacher	Francis Joy
Main content	An examination of a multitude of issues surrounding the reproduction and appropriation of Sámi cultural heritage into tourism, which pertains to the misuse and abuse of Sámi traditions and practices.
Key words	Cultural appropriation, drums, figures, symbols, tourism, fake art.

Title of the lecture	Seminar class and presentations (4 hours)
Teacher	Francis Joy

Main content	Students will present their work individually or in groups that will cover one of the topics presented within the lecture series. Each person will be given 5 minutes to speak. What they have learned will be assessed through their work.
Key words	Sámi traditions, spiritual practices, tourism, rock art, shamanism, appropriation, learning outcomes

ASPB Human-Nature Relations in Arctic Urban Development 5 ECTS

Principal tutor: Monica Tennberg

Title of the lecture	What is a city? (2 hours)
Teacher	Monica Tennberg
Main content	Introduction to Arctic cities and urban development; presentation of central concepts; and a group task about urban nature
Reading task	Hemmersam, P. (2016) Arctic architectures. Polar Record 52 (265): 412–422.
Keywords	Arctic city, urban development, urbanization, urbanism, urban nature

Title of the lecture	A city and change – a walking tour in the Rovaniemi city center (2 hours)
Teacher	Monica Tennberg
Main content	A walking tour in the city center; discussion about development, history and memory sites
Reading task	Annapalo, P. (1998) Rovaniemi. 8000 years of international history. The city of Rovaniemi.
Keywords	urban landscape, urban history, memory environments, memory sites

Title of the lecture	What makes a city arctic? (2 hours)
Teacher	Monica Tennberg
Main content	Introduction to Arctic and urban photography; discussion on urban arcticness based on photos taken or brought by students.
Reading task	Rose, G. (2014) Visual Culture, Photography and the Urban: An Interpretive Framework. Space and Culture.
Keywords	urban arcticness, urban photography, visual representation

Title of the lecture	Urban nature in everyday life – a walking tour in the Arctic garden TBC
Teacher	Monica Tennberg
Main content	Introduction to the history of the Arctic garden; a walk in the garden; and an exercise in sensory walking
Reading task	Aula, I. (2021). Discovering Weedy Landscapes as Sensory Commons. Dimensions of Architectural Knowledge. https://doi.org/10.14361/dak-2021-0213
Keywords	urban nature, urban human-nature relations, sensory walking

Title of the lecture	Urban metabolism (2 hours)
Teacher	Hannah Strauss-Mazzullo
Main content	Introduction to the concept of urban metabolism; a group task focusing on urban water and waste management
Reading task	Kaika, M. (2005) Nature as the urban uncanny. Chapter 4. In M. Kaika, City of flows: modernity, nature and the city. Routledge.
Keywords	urban metabolism, water management, waste management

Title of the lecture	Urban conflicts (2 hours)
Teacher	Monica Tennberg
Main content	Introduction to urban nature-related conflicts; the case of Kemijoki River; a group task on urban conflicts
Reading task	Tennberg, M. (2022). The “International” in Water–Society Relations: A Case Study of an Arctic Urban Watershed. In M. Lehtimäki, A. Rosenholm, E. Trubina, & N. Tynkkynen (Eds.), <i>Cold Waters: Tangible and Symbolic Seascapes of the North</i> (pp. 89-104). Springer.
Keywords	urban conflicts, River Kemijoki, river restoration

ASPB Climate and Food Security in the Arctic with global consequences 3 ECTS

Title of the lecture	The complexity of food system and implications (3 hours)
Teacher	Dele Raheem

Main content	Introduction to climate change and food security. The urgent need for collaborative efforts at a global level.
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Keywords	Arctic, Sustainability, Natural resources, Food and Human Security

Title of the lecture	Impacts of climate change on the food system (3 hours)
Teacher	Dele Raheem
Main content	Food insecurity has been associated with several diet-related chronic diseases, including obesity, diabetes, and hypertension. We will take a critical look at the impacts of climate change on the food system in the Arctic and how this is reflected in other parts of the globe.
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Keywords	food (in)security, health, environment, economic, digitalization

Title of the lecture	Group work (2 hours)
Teacher	Dele Raheem
Main content	Group work and presentation on special topics related to the course

Title of the lecture	Field work (6 hours)
Teacher	Dele Raheem
Main content	Field work, a visit to an educational food processing unit in Rovaniemi