

SYLLABUS DEL CORSO

Politiche Pubbliche: Valutazione

2122-2-E1601N067-E1601N056M

Learning objectives

The second module 'Public Policies: Evaluation' provides a gentle introduction to the main analytical methods used to make an empirically based judgment on the success of a public policy. Intuitively, the module helps students understanding what does it means to establish whether a public policy has "succeeded", has produced the "desired results" or not, and which tools/methods can be used for this purpose.

- Distinguish between perception and evidence of the results achieved by a public policy;
- Evaluate the robustness of the empirical evidences put forward by politicians and policy makers in the public debate in support of the success of a public policy;
- Understand the content and critically discuss evaluation examples published in leading national and international journals in the field;
- Apply the main impact assessment methods based on the counterfactual logic to case studies inspired by real public policies, but simplified in terms of data for didactic purposes.

Contents

The second module 'Public Policies: Evaluation' will address the following topics:

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- The counterfactual logic and Rubin's model.
- Randomized controlled trials.
- Difference in differences.
- Regression analysis.

- Statistical matching.
- Regression discontinuity design.
- Instrumental variables approach.
- Interrupted time series.
- Policy analysis in the era of big data.

Detailed program

The second module "Public Policies: Evaluation" is divided into three parts.

Finally, the third part offers students a focus in a seminar format on the potential and challenges that the era of big data poses to policy analysis (topic addressed in Module I) and evaluation.

Prerequisites

Students are allowed to attend classes, to join class exercises, to take the mid-term and final exams and to do the team work of the second module "Public Policies: Evaluation" even if they have not yet taken the written exam of the first module "Public Policies: Decision and Implementation" (Prof. Erica Melloni). However, they have to be familiar with the topics covered by the first module "Public Policies: Decision and Implementation". Besides, the requirements for the second module "Public Policies: Evaluation" are minimal. It assumes only a decent knowledge of algebra and a basic understanding of descriptive and inferential statistics.

Teaching methods

The second module "Public Policies: Evaluation" will make use of standard lectures (with Q&A), class exercises and team work.

Assessment methods

The program is the same for attending and non-attending students. However, the way in which learning is verified is different. Attendance is not compulsory, but it is warmly suggested given the nature of the topics covered in this second module.

- An intermediate written exam on the first part of the program (10 questions in 2 hours). The test includes multiple choice questions, table completion, simple calculations and short open-ended questions (max 6 lines). Scores 0-31. Students scoring <18 or willing to retake the exam will be allowed to take a final written exam for attending students at the end of the module.
 - A team work. In small groups (max 5 people), students must read, understand, present and critically discuss in English a scientific paper published in an international journal on public policy impact evaluation. Evaluation: up to +3 points to be added to the average between the intermediate and the final exam (or to the score of the final exam for students scoring <18 or willing to retake the first intermediate exam).
 - Final written exam on the second part of the program (10 questions in two hours). Note: an open question concerns the paper read by the student during the team work and grants up to 4 points. Scores: 0-31. Students scoring <18 or willing to retake the first intermediate exam, will have a final written test for attending students on the whole program (open 4 points question on the team work included).
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The **final mark** of the course 'Public Policies' is given by the average of the scores achieved in Module 1 and Module 2. Students whose final average is <18 must necessarily retake one or both of the written tests. Students with a final average >18, but dissatisfied with the grade, **may ask the Professor via email to take a further oral exam** on the program of both modules. Based on the quality of their answers, the final average of the two written tests can be increased by 10% or lowered.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

The program is the same for attending and non-attending students and includes:

- Martini, Alberto, e Marco Sisti (2009), *Valutare il successo delle politiche pubbliche*, Bologna: il Mulino, capp. Introduzione, 1; 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16.
 - Damonte A., Negri F. (eds, forthcoming in February 2022). *Causality in Policy Studies - A Pluralist Toolbox*, Springer Series "Texts in Quantitative Political Analysis", Cham (Switzerland): Springer Nature, capp. 3, 4.
 - Costalli, S., & Negri, F. (2021). Looking for twins: How to build better counterfactuals with matching. *Italian Political Science Review/Rivista Italiana Di Scienza Politica*, 51(2), 215-230. doi:10.1017/ipo.2021.1
 - Ceron, Andrea, e Fedra Negri (2015). "Public policy and social media: How sentiment analysis can support policy-makers across the policy cycle". *Rivista Italiana di Politiche Pubbliche* 10(3): 309-338.
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