UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Public Policies: Decision and Implementation

2223-2-E1601N067-E1601N055M

Learning objectives

The first module 'Public Policies: Decision and Implementation' introduces the main topics and concepts of political science, with particular attention to policy-making processes. After an introduction to the discipline and its objects of study (politics vs policy), the module covers the problems of collective action and decision-making processes within groups, the actors (parties, interest groups and experts) and the institutions (parliaments, governments and public administration) of the representative process. Finally, the module focuses on the chain of responsiveness in the realms of fiscal and welfare policies, from parties' electoral promises to national governments' budgetary choices, to verify whether and to what extent the former translate into coherent policy choices.

Contents

The first module 'Public Policies: Decision and Implementation' addresses the following topics:

- What is political science?
- Political science and study of public policies
- Policy types and tools
- The problems of collective decision-making processes
- Policy-making
- The actors of public policies
    - Parties
    - Parliament
    - Government
    - Public administration
    - Interest groups and the theory of collective action
    - Experts
- Politics determines policy or vice versa? The case of fiscal and welfare policies.

Detailed program

The first module "Public Policies: Decision and Implementation" is divided into three parts.

The first part introduces students to the discipline of political science, clarifying the objects of study and the methodological approaches. It then focuses on public policy analysis as an applied science to identify solutions to problems perceived as relevant by the community.

In the second, more extensive part of the module, students are introduced to the theories and models of the policy process. Great attention is devoted to the actors (parties, interest groups and experts) and institutions (parliaments, governments and the public administration) of the representative process.

Finally, the third and last part of the module focuses on the chain of responsiveness in the field of fiscal and welfare policies, from parties' electoral promises to national governments' budgetary choices, to verify whether and to what extent the former translate into consistent policy choices.

Prerequisites

The requirements for the first module "Public Policies: Decision and Implementation" are minimal. It assumes only a decent knowledge of English, algebra and a basic understanding of descriptive and inferential statistics.

Teaching methods

The first module "Public Policies: Decision and Implementation" will make use of standard lectures 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.

Students who participate to the lectures and team works will be able to access the exam for attending students. The others will access the exam for non-attending students.

The **exam for attending students** includes:
• A team work. In small groups (max 6 people), students must answer a research question formulated by the instructor. To do this, they must personally and critically rework the content of scientific papers and refer to data and empirical evidences. Evaluation: up to +3 points to be added to the final exam.
• Final written exam (10 questions in two hours). Note: an open question will concern the teamwork and grant up to 4 points. Scores: 0-31.

The **exam for non-attending students**, instead, is a single final written test (10 questions in 2 hours). Scores: 0-31. Please note: the program is identical to that of attending students. However, non-attending students do not benefit from either the 4-point open question regarding the paper read during the teamwork, or the potential 3 points for teamwork to be added to the final evaluation.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

The program is the same for attending and non-attending students. Lessons are prepared by integrating and reworking the contents of scientific articles and selected chapters selected from the following three handbooks:

Clark W. R., Golder M. e Golder S. N. (2022, 2° edizione in italiano a cura di Franchino F., Curini L., Giannetti D., Vignoli V. e Zucchini F.), Principi di Scienza Politica, McGrawHill
• The 2022 edition is recommended. However, the 2011 edition, edited by Carbone G., Curini L., Fasano L. and Zucchini F. is fine too.
• Of this manual, chapters 1, 2, 3, 8, 11, 12, 14, 16 will be used.
• A shorter version of this manual, entitled "Principi di scienza politica. Selezione per il corso Politiche Pubbliche", has been produced. This version contains only the chapters of interest for the course and therefore is cheaper. It can be purchased from mid-October by communicating the ISBN 9781307851441 to the bookshop.

Caramani D. (2021, 3° edizione), Scienza Politica, Egea.
• The 2021 edition is recommended. However, previous editions are fine too.
• Of this manual, chapters 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12 will be used.

Cotta M., Della Porta D. e Morlino L. (2008), Scienza Politica, Il Mulino.
• The 2008 edition is recommended. However, the 2001 edition is fine too.
• Of this manual, chapters 12, 15 and 17 will be used.
• This manual is available in the university library.

The document PP_Decision_Implementation_Argomenti_Bibliografia.pdf available on the E-learning platform contains a table that specifies, for each topic, which chapters and which scientific articles have been used by the professor to prepare the corresponding lesson. Several teaching materials are available online on the E-learning page.

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION