INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

The Public Policy Process

Overview
The world of policy and politics, governance and government can be murky with seemingly transparent and tangled connections. Who gets to define the agenda, what type of policy will come to the fore and who is accountable? This course sheds light on some of these concepts using the work of respected authors in the field. It allows learners to understand how a critical analytic and descriptive framework can help understand who is involved in the policy process, how it operates and ultimately leads to a discussion about who is accountable. The answers to these questions help lay a solid foundation for further exploration of policy analysis and formation in other courses.

The course will be divided into four units. The first unit will serve as an introduction to public policy. In the second unit, students will look more in detail at the structure of the public policy cycle as defined by Paul Cairney. Unit three is dedicated to the actors in the policy arena and their decision-making process. Finally, unit four will introduce the topics of accountability and policy evaluation.

Key Concepts
- Understanding the public policy process
- Learning theoretical frameworks underlying policy-making
- Being able to identify the different stages of a policy and which actors are involved

Learning Goals
By the end of the course students should be able to:
- Understand the distinction between policy and politics; government and governance
- Understand how the national political discourse affects policy making and decision making
- Understand the stages of the policy cycle and their interactions
- Be able to think critically about the actors in the policy making process in their own country and the influences and motivations they may have in the policy process
- Be able to distinguish between outputs and outcomes, monitoring and evaluation
- Understand the importance and relevance of the policy process and all stages of the policy cycle, thereby laying an important foundation for the next course on the techniques for monitoring and evaluation
- Overall, the student should be able to critically reflect on the literature provided and be able to distil this knowledge into their own country context.
• COURSE OUTLINE
  1. Unit 1: Introduction to public policy
  2. Unit 2: The public policy cycle
  3. Unit 3: Actors in the public policy process
  4. Unit 4: Monitoring, evaluation, and accountability

• LEARNING MATERIALS

1. Lectures / Video Recordings
   • Lecture slides are provided online
   • There are introductory video recordings for each module.

2. Readings

REQUIRED


Buse, Kent, Mays, Nicholas, Walt, Gill, Making Health Policy, McGraw-Hill Education (UK), 2012, Chapter 2


Suresh Chandra Babu, Smita Aggarwal, Junjie Chen, Role of Media in Shaping the Policy Process, IFPRI Discussion Paper 01651 (June 2017)


John W. Kingdon, Agendas, alternatives, and public policies, Little, Brown, 1984,
chapters 1-3

Thomas R. Dye, Understanding Public Policy, 2013. Chapter 3


FURTHER READING


Francis Fukuyama: Inequality. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GxZBsALaVys


• REQUIRED ACTIVITIES

1. Introduction videos
   • You are required to watch the introductory video recording for each module

2. Discussion Forum
   • You are advised to interact with others on the discussion forum to share ideas and knowledge. Online tutors will also be available to help.

3. Assignments
   • There is one assignment per unit. All four assignment contribute to the final grade. Self-assessment quizzes are also part of the exercises.

• GRADING PROCEDURE

Four assignments will contribute 25% each towards the final grade. A final oral examination is also part of the grading process to assess acquired knowledge.

• TIMELINE

1. Module order and time schedule
   • The course will begin with unit 1 in the first week. Each successive unit will be covered over 1 week. The course should cover a total of four weeks.

2. Deadlines required activities (specific time and day, CET time and verify the online platform is adjusted carefully – consider time added or time exactly set in the upload).
   • Students will be asked to complete an assignment at the end of each module.
• CONTACT DETAILS

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