

67503 - Methodology: research, analysis and evaluation of public policy

Syllabus Information

Academic Year: 2019/20

Subject: 67503 - Methodology: research, analysis and evaluation of public policy

Faculty / School: 109 -

Degree: 523 - Master's in Sociology of Public and Social Policy

ECTS: 6.0

Year: 1

Semester: First semester

Subject Type: Compulsory

Module: ---

1.General information

1.1.Aims of the course

Brief presentation of the subject

Are the Public Administrations the same as the State? Are public and social policies a monopoly of those Administrations, of that State? Are there more actors in this scene? Are they the only elements of the system? Does organized civil society and ordinary citizens have anything to say?

The State, defined in the Weberian way, still needs to exercise a monopoly of violence. If not, now they tell us that it is a failed state. And it is because it does not comply with the law, nor with the right ... nor with the services it must provide to a citizenry that grants it the institutional legitimacy necessary to be viable.

State, singular masculine noun, that Pater that makes patrias and gives rise to patriotism whether constitutional or not. That has been replaced by the Public Administrations, feminine, plural. Matria that has to nourish as a Pachamamá the totality of what it welcomes. A linguistic (re) construction that removes important foundations when it comes to understanding the codes of meaning and the practices that are built in our social system.

And this has occurred at a time when society, ordinary people, in that consumer / citizen duality, demands that the public thing works ... and if it is not so, change it, improve it or, simply, that stop disturbing.

Public and social policies are not only as decorative elements, nor as ideological adornments. For that reason, those who propose and manage them must be accountable for their results, they have the obligation to evaluate what they are doing and what they leave to do ... The discourses on social action have to be confronted and contrasted with the derivative works of his praxis.

In this context, this subject must be located in which it is intended: (i) First, to review the methodological and epistemological foundations of social research in order to unravel public and social policies; (ii). second, to deepen in the tools investigation, analysis and socioeconomic evaluation of applied way and (iii). to propose a model of evaluation of impact of the public and social policies that take to the practice.

1.2.Context and importance of this course in the degree

This is one of the core subjects of the Master, which has been conceived as one of the pieces on which to build the whole learning of the people who study these studies.

1.3.Recommendations to take this course

This matter has a core character. It has been designed thinking about the foundation of the research works that are developed in the whole of the Master, but also to respond to subsequent professional and research activities.

People who wish to study this subject must have well-grounded knowledge within the field of social sciences. It is not an introductory course to the methodology of the social sciences. The basic knowledge is taken for granted. Which is not an obstacle to raise in the initial sessions a review of them that allows to move forward with the objectives of the subject.

The main activities of the subject are presented in the first session, at the beginning of the course. The calendar is distributed in eight sessions and will be adjusted to the progress of the group in terms of the readings and practical activities to be carried out. The last session of the course is reserved for the presentation of works and the realization of the tests foreseen in the evaluation system. The attendance to the sessions is fundamental to be able to take the content of the matter in an appropriate way.

2. Learning goals

2.1. Competences

Upon passing the subject, the student will be more competent to:

- analyze the different dimensions of public and social policies from a multidisciplinary and systemic perspective, both at the theoretical and applied levels
- evaluate the praxis of public and social policies from a multidisciplinary and systemic perspective
- study the sociological elements of the social system that enable and limit public policies by accurately managing theoretical perspectives and their practical consequences
- apply with skill the techniques of social research for the analysis of structures and social processes
- assess the social and cultural consequences of public and social policies
- apply models of accountability of organizations following the most current techniques of "accountability" and social efficiency

2.2. Learning goals

The subject and its expected results respond to the following approaches and objectives:

The purpose is to deepen the contents already studied in previous stages and to address them in an integral way. The points to develop will be:

- Social research methods, strengths and epistemological weaknesses: a review of its bases, scope and limits with special emphasis on the analysis of public and social policies
- The tools of socioeconomic research of complex systems: beyond the quantitative / qualitative distinction. Review and deepening of empirical research techniques applied to the study of public and social policies
- Impact evaluation of public and social policies: from supervision and the fundamentals of accountability to audits and technical inspection

2.3. Importance of learning goals

It is intended that each student obtain, on the one hand, a comprehensive vision of the methodology of social research acquired in previous stages of their training, on the other hand, improve their training to understand the social and political contexts in which they will develop their professional work. and to face the challenges of investigation in the approach of the concrete problems of the population and the individuals and in the search of alternative solutions.

3. Assessment (1st and 2nd call)

3.1. Assessment tasks (description of tasks, marking system and assessment criteria)

The student must demonstrate that he has achieved the expected learning outcomes through the following assessment activities:

Active participation in the sessions of the course through the presentation and discussion of readings and topics established for each of them. The lack of regular attendance will force the completion of the global test. There are 10 points of the final grade.

Performing a critical essay to review the contents of the subject of 700 words of extension to be delivered on the date established at the beginning of the course. There are 30 points of the final grade.

Preparation of a work where the knowledge of the subject is applied to a case to be chosen by each student. This work will be presented publicly in the last session of the course. It will have a minimum extension of 2000 words and a maximum of 4000. This section is optional, those who resign to do it can only aspire to a score of 70 points out of 100 given that this section is 30 points of the final grade.

Realization of a practical written test in the last session of the course. It will last one hour. All kinds of materials can be consulted. It is necessary to pass this test to consider the rest of the evaluation sections. There are 30 points of the final grade.

Those who opt for the global evaluation of the subject must pass a practical written test in a one-hour exercise. In addition, they must defend orally and publicly an essay and a work of empirical application equivalent to the previous ones. This will be done on the date set for the purpose.

4. Methodology, learning tasks, syllabus and resources

4.1. Methodological overview

The learning process that has been designed for this subject is based on the following:

The working method of the subject, on the one hand, has a propaedeutic character in the part corresponding to the theory sessions. On the other hand, by way of maieutics will be raised those central issues in research, analysis and evaluation of public and social policies. It is an open and, above all, participatory method. That is why, in addition, the discussion and the active debate on the part of the students of the proposed texts and the questions that may arise are taken for granted.

In each session, one or more persons will be responsible for their coordination with the presentation of the text to be worked on. The task of the rest of the group will be the reading and comments to the presentation of the session leader.

Parallel to the reading of the texts, the application to a practical case is sought in the investigations that each one of the people of the seminar is developing or could consider. It should not be forgotten that the aim to which the course points is the theoretical foundation and validation, but also the applied dimension of social research in the field of public and social policies.

4.2.Learning tasks

The program offered to the student to help him/her achieve the expected results includes the following activities ...

The subject is organized in weekly sessions where the proposed readings are worked on as the course progresses. This will be accompanied by dynamic work sessions in which the most relevant elements seen in the readings will be put into practice.

It is planned to have the contribution of guest speaker(s) to present some applied aspects of the subject that will be specified according to the possibilities and assistance of visiting professors.

4.3.Syllabus

Initially the planned program of sessions and topics is as follows:

- SESSION 1: Introduction and general presentation of the subject. Teaching plan, evaluation system, readings, materials.
- SESSION 2: Methodological and epistemological foundations of social research
- SESSION 3: Methodological and epistemological foundations of social research
- SESSION 4: Research, analysis and evaluation tools
- SESSION 5: Complex phenomena
- SESSION 6: Impact evaluation
- SESSION 7: Accountability
- SESSION 8: Written test and presentation of papers

4.4.Course planning and calendar

Calendar of face-to-face sessions and presentation of works

As already indicated, it is organized by weeks where expositive activities will be combined with the dynamics, depending on the evolution of the course, the characteristics of the group of students and the teaching-learning process. Initially the planned design starts from a review of the theoretical foundations of the methodological issues to explore the different dimensions involved in the practical execution of social research. The last session is reserved for the presentation of papers and the performance of evaluation tests.

4.5.Bibliography and recommended resources