

## SYLLABUS

### Decision Making

### Fall 2018

#### 1. General information about the course

Course title: Decision Making

ECTS (number of credits): 4

Year and Semester: Semester 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> Year

#### 2. General information about the instructor

Instructor's name: Bianca Radu

Contact information: bianca.radu@fspac.ro

Office hours: Thursday, 12-13, room I/6, or by appointment

#### 3. Course description

**General objective of the discipline:** The main objective of this course is to reinforce the students' individual capacity of decision-making by making them familiar with the various factors influencing the process and with the most relevant models of decision-making process. Also, the course aims to develop the analytical skills of the public administration students (future civil servants), making them capable of understanding the structure, the patterns and essential concepts of the decision-making processes.

#### Specific objectives

- presenting the conceptual framework of the decision-making process in the public sector
- develop the analytical skills
- understanding the structure, the patterns and essential concepts of the decision-making processes

#### 4. Required bibliography

1. Skinner, D., *Introduction to Decision Analysis. A Practitioner's Guide to Improving Decision Quality*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Probabilistic Publishing, 2009.
2. Baron, J., *Judgment Misguided. Intuition and Error in Public Decision Making*, Oxford University Press, 1998.
3. Hoch, J.S., Kunreuther, H.C. and Gunther, R.E. (eds.), *Wharton on Making Decisions*, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2001.
4. Thaler, R.H. and Sunstein, *Nudge. Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth and Happiness*, Yale University Press, 2008.
5. Stone, D., *Policy Paradox. The Art of Political Decision Making*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988.
6. Dunn, W.N., *Public Policy Analysis. An Introduction*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008.
7. Hînțea, C.E. and Radu, B., "Decision Making in Romanian Public Institutions at Local and County Level. An Interdisciplinary Inquiry", Cluj-Napoca: Accent, 2011

All the readings are scanned and uploaded on Moodle.

**5. Topics and course schedule**

	<b>Topics</b>
4.10.2018	<b>1. Introductory course: the field of decision-making processes and its relevance for administrative science</b> Skinner, D., Introduction to Decision Analysis. A Practitioner's Guide to Improving Decision Quality, 3 <sup>rd</sup> edition, Probabilistic Publishing, 2009, Chapter 1. Introduction, pp. 1-17.
11.10.2018	<b>2. Decision Elements. Decision Process</b> Skinner, D., Introduction to Decision Analysis. A Practitioner's Guide to Improving Decision Quality, 3 <sup>rd</sup> edition, Probabilistic Publishing, 2009, chp. 4 and 5, pp. 72-79 and pp. 96-108.
18.10.2018	<b>3. Making decisions in a complex world: Uncertainty and types of decisions</b> Skinner, D., Introduction to Decision Analysis. A Practitioner's Guide to Improving Decision Quality, 3 <sup>rd</sup> edition, Probabilistic Publishing, 2009, Chapter 2, Decision Making in a Complex World, pp. 19-38.
25.10.2018	<b>4. Decisions, consequences and fairness</b> Baron, J., Judgment Misguided. Intuition and Error in Public Decision Making, Oxford University Press, 1998, chp. 3, pp. 47-67.
1.11.2018	<b>5. Making Sense of Numbers</b> Gupta, D., Analyzing Public Policy, CQ Press, 2011, chp. 9, pp. 203-224
8.11.2018	<b>6. The use of simple descriptive techniques. The use of maps</b> Ammons, D.N., Tools for Decision Making, CQ Press, 2009, chp. 2 and 7, pp. 12-20 and 58-65
15.11.2018	<b>7. Projection Techniques: Analysis of Historical Data</b> Gupta, D., Analyzing Public Policy, CQ Press, 2011, chp. 11, pp. 249-270
22.11.2018	<b>8. Decision Making Techniques: Decision Trees</b> Stone, D., Policy Paradox. The Art of Political Decision Making, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988, pp. 232-256.
29.11.2018	No lecture
6.12.2018	<b>9. Decision Making Techniques: Multi-Attribute Analysis</b> <b>Case Study: Saving Lives and Wasting Time: Thinking Critically about Speeding and Traffic Fatalities</b> Dunn, W.N., Public Policy Analysis. An Introduction, 4 <sup>th</sup> edition, Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008, pp. 24-32, pp. 268-272.
13.12.2018	<b>10. Participation of citizens in the decision making process</b>

	Haruta, C. and Radu, B., Citizens participations in the decision making process at local and county levels in Romanian public institutions, 2010, Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences, 31E, pp. 76-92.
20.12.2018	<b>12. Theories explaining how decisions are made in the public sector (Rational Choice and Limited Rationality)</b> March, J., A Primer on Decision Making, New York: Free Press, 1994, Chp. 1, pp. 1-35
10.01.2018	<b>13. Theories explaining how decisions are made in the public sector (other models)</b> Hințea, C.E. and Radu, B., “Decision Making in Romanian Public Institutions at Local and County Level. An Interdisciplinary Inquiry”, Cluj-Napoca: Accent, 2011, Chp. 2
17.01.2018	<b>Course review</b>

## 6. Evaluation:

Final grade is composed of:

- **50% - written final exam** - For the final exam, students have to prove that they understood the main concepts related to the decision-making process in the public sector. The exam will be an in-class written exam with open questions regarding the topics discussed during the entire semester.
- **20% - 2 short reflection papers** - Each student has to write two papers about actual examples that illustrate theoretical concepts discussed during semester. The accent of the analysis should be placed on critical analysis of the examples, rather than restating the main ideas from the reading. Students have to present these examples during seminars (otherwise the papers will not be graded), and they will be assigned a date to present, based on mutual agreement, at the beginning of the semester. Each paper should be of approximately two pages. The paper should contain a presentation of the theoretical concept illustrated by the example, presentation of the actual example and then a discussion of the facts from the lens of the theoretical concept. The example can be from Romania or from abroad.
- **10%** - Students have to attend a **County or Local Council meeting** and to analyze the decision making process from the perspective of the following indicators: proposals that were subject to decision, number of citizens and NGO' s representatives who attended the meetings, number of recommendations made by citizens and NGO representatives and whether recommendations were included in the final draft of the proposals, whether proposals of normative acts were subject to transparency procedure before being subject to decision in the council meeting. Students have to make a presentation during seminar of their analysis. If students cannot attend a council meeting, they can watch the recorded video of Cluj-Napoca Local Council meeting which are available of the Cluj-Napoca City Hall website.
- **20%** - For the **final paper**, students have to write a paper about how two or more public institutions or municipalities tried to solve the same problem (such as traffic congestion or enhancing student performance or school dropout etc.). The focus of the analysis should be on comparing the measures adopted for solving the problem and on analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of the solutions. Students have to present their paper during the last seminar.

**Students have to attend 75% of the seminars in order to be allowed to take the final exam.**