



**Magistral degree in Economics, policies and management of territory  
Academic year 2015/16**

**Economics of public decision making (1<sup>st</sup> year, 2<sup>nd</sup> semester, 9 ECTS)**

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Office hours: Tuesday 12-13.30: Wednesday 12.00-13.30.

<b>General Objectives of teaching in terms of expected results of learning</b>	<p>Provide analytical knowledge to understand economic theory on public decision-making (knowledge and understanding) and the capacity to apply it in a critical and original manner to the analysis of national and international decision-making processes (Applying knowledge and understanding).</p> <p>Make student exercise their critical skills so that they are capable to identify the main assumptions of the theory, the instruments adopted and the limits of the theory. The objective is that students are capable to integrate the knowledge acquired and apply it to the analysis of institutions and political processes, getting ready for the job market. Prepare student to interpret data to develop critical analysis skills (Making judgments).</p> <p>Encourage the ability of students of exposition of personal opinions to experts as well as a non-specialized public (Communication skills).</p> <p>Stimulate students to study autonomously and communicate their knowledge clearly (Learning skills).</p>
<b>Pre- requisites</b>	None. A basic knowledge of economic theory on public intervention can facilitate the learning process.
<b>Teaching organization/ methods</b>	<p>Lectures presenting slides that will be made available on STUDIUM right after lectures.</p> <p>Invited speakers may be invited to illustrate specific topics.</p> <p>Students' group presentations.</p>
<b>Attendance</b>	Thre classes per week. Normally non mandatory but advisable.
<b>Reference texts</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mueller, Dennis () <i>Public choice II</i>, ... Or Mueller D. (), <i>Public Choice III</i>. Cambridge University Press</li> <li>Additional readings will be provided by the lecturer.</li> </ol>
<b>Evaluation</b>	<p style="text-align: right;"><b>In itinere evaluation</b></p> <p>Students can decide to prepare a group presentation on one of the topics illustrated in class. The presentation must include a <u>critical</u> survey of the main theoretical issues and their application to a case drawn from the national or international context.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Final term evaluation</b></p> <p>No</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Evaluation dates</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.economia.unict.it/Didattica/Dirario-esami">http://www.economia.unict.it/Didattica/Dirario-esami</a></p>
<b>Material availability</b>	STUDIUM



Public choice applies the economic principles to the political decision-making process. Among the topics illustrated in the course are: the role and the function of the government, the decision-making process of the government and the actors that take decisions and implement them, the relationship between private and public interests, the relationship electors-politicians and politicians-bureaucrats, the effect of the evolution of governments, the impact of internet on democracy, new models of governance.

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Reference text</b>
<b>1. Introduction to the course: public choice – the objectives of the decision makers.</b>	<b>Text 1: ch. 1-2</b>
<b>*2. Introduction: social choice – rules of collective decision-making (normative analysis)</b>	<b>Text 1: ch.3 &amp; text 2</b>
<b>*3. Rules of collective decision-making: majority rule</b>	<b>Text 1: ch.11</b>
<b>*4. Rules of collective decision-making: majority rule</b>	<b>Text 1: ch.11 &amp; 13</b>
<b>*5. More complex rules of collective decision-making</b>	<b>Text 1: ch. 13</b>
<b>*6. The main actors: politicians</b>	<b>Text 1: ch. 16</b>
<b>*7. The main actors: politicians and interest groups (rent seeking I)</b>	<b>Text 1: ch. 15</b>
<b>*8. The main actors: politicians and interest groups (rent seeking II)</b>	<b>Text 1: ch.20</b>
<b>*9. The main actors: bureaucrats</b>	<b>Text 1: ch. 17</b>
<b>*10. Recent theories on bureaucracy</b>	<b>Text 2</b>
<b>*11. Politicians and bureaucrats</b>	<b>Text 1: ch. 16 &amp; 17</b>
<b>*12. Politicians and bureaucrats and interest groups -</b>	<b>Text 1: ch. 20</b>
<b>*13. Politicians and bureaucrats and interest groups -</b>	<b>Text 1: ch. 20</b>
<b>*14. Institutions: introduction</b>	<b>Text 1: ch. 21 &amp; text 2</b>
<b>*15. Theory of institutions</b>	<b>Text 1: ch. 21</b>
<b>*16. Institutions: reciprocal control</b>	<b>Text 2</b>
<b>*17. Decentralisation: introduction</b>	<b>Text 1: ch. 28</b>
<b>*18. Decentralisation: pro &amp; contra</b>	<b>Text 2</b>
<b>*19. Decentralisation: models</b>	<b>Text 2</b>
<b>*20. Decentralisation: recent evolution in Italy</b>	<b>Text 2</b>
<b>*21. Decentralisation: European governance</b>	<b>Text 2</b>
<b>*22. Internet and democracy I</b>	<b>Text 2</b>
<b>*23. Internet and democracy II</b>	<b>Text 2</b>
<b>*24. Internet and democracy III</b>	<b>Text 2</b>
<b>*25. New models of public governance I</b>	<b>Text 2</b>
<b>*26. New models of public governance II</b>	<b>Text 2</b>



<b>*27. New models of public governance III</b>	<b>Text 2</b>
<b>28. Guest lecture: Italian experiences</b>	<b>Text 1: chapter 21</b>
<b>29. Guest lecture: international experiences</b>	<b>Text 2</b>
<b>30. Final summary</b>	<b>Text 1 &amp; 2</b>

**\* Topics whose knowledge is fundamental to pass the exam**

### **Examples of typical questions**

1. Referendum: pro and contra according to theory
- 2 Political control on bureaucracy: tools and effectiveness.
3. Rent seeking
4. Theoretical justification of decentralization.
5. EU impact on the decision-making process of its member states.
6. Public-private partnership: theoretical justification and effects.