**Master in Political Ecology**

**Academic year: 2020****-21**

**SOCIAL MULTI-CRITERIA EVALUATION**

Instructors

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**Objectives**

The course will introduce the social multicriteria evaluation framework for public decision making, paying attention to theoretical, methodological and practical issues. It will familiarize you with the foundations of SMCE, basic concepts, methods and case studies.

Prior to that, we will discuss and reflect on the role of the researchers and academia in the framework of activist-research.

By the end of the course, students would be able to differentiate the principles guiding activist- and academic research.

Also, students will be able structure a decision-making process in a multicriteria structure; defining alternatives and criteria to support participatory processes and decision making.

**Structure**

The course has 6, 3-hours classes. Most of classes will involve a mixing of teaching: short introduction by the professor, followed by discussions and group work.

Also, students will split in groups to develop a role within a case study to apply the knowledge acquired during the theoretical part of the class.

**Evaluation**

The class will develop a case study proposed by the professor. Groups of 5 people will choose a role in a case study to apply a social multicriteria evaluation. Each group will describe their interests and objectives, propose alternatives and define evaluation criteria.

**Program outline**

**Part 1 Reflection on activist-research**

In these two 3-hour classes we will discuss the frameworks of activist- and academic-research. Students are invited to reflect on their role as researchers and/or activists, and on the implications of sometimes contradictory and complementing domains: the academia and the social movements.

Class 1.

In this class, students will define, reflect on and confront the principles of activist- and academic-research. As well, students will self-reflect on their privileges when carrying out research in different domains.

Class 2.

In this class, the UAB’s Code of Good Practice will be introduced. Students will reflect on the suitability of the Code when carrying out research that involves communities with political purposes/scope.

**Part 2. Social Multicriteria Evaluation**

This part of the course is based on the development of a case study. Students will be split in groups of 5 and choose one of the roles of the case. By developing the case study, students will apply the concepts explained in class.

*(The content of the classes will depend on the advances in the case study development)*

**Introduction to SMCE. Theoretical foundations and basic concepts**

In this part, students will learn basic concepts of multicriteria evaluation and its structure: alternatives, attribute, criteria, indicators.

References

*Foundations of SMCE*

Munda, G., 2004. Social Multi-Criteria Evaluation (SMCE): methodological foundations and operational consequences. European Journal of Operational Research 158 (3), 662–677.

Banville, C., Landry, M., Martel, J.M., Boulaire, C., 1998. A stakeholder approach to MCDA. Systems Research and Behavioral Science 15 (1), 15–32

Proctor W, Drechsler M., 2006. Deliverative multicriteria evaluation. Environmental and Planning C: Government and Policy; 24:169-190

*Applications and basic concepts*

Garmendia, E., Gamboa, G., Franco, J., Garmendia, J., Liria, P., Olazábal, M., 2010a. Social multi-criteria evaluation as a decision support tool for integrated coastal zone management. Ocean and Coastal Management 53, 385–403.

Gamboa G, Munda G. The problem of windfarm location: A social multicriteria evaluation framework. Energy Policy 2007; 35(3):1564e83.

Etxano I., Barinaga-Rementeria I., Garcia O., 2018. Conflicting Values in Rural Planning: A Multifunctionality Approach through Social Multi-Criteria Evaluation. Sustainability 18(5).

Bouyssou, D., 1990. Building criteria: a prerequisite for MCDA. In: Bana e Costa, C.A. (Ed.), Readings in Multiple Criteria Decision Aid. Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg, New York.

**Multicriteria methods in a SMCE context**

In this last part of the course, we will review some multicriteria methods and the requirements for their use in public decision-making.

References

Munda G., 2008. The Issue of Consistency: Lessons Learned from Social Choice Literature. In Munda G, Social Multi-Criteria Evaluation for a Sustainable Economy. Chapter 6. Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg.

Roy B., 1990. The outranking approach and the foundations of Electre methods. In: Bana e Costa (Eds.) Multicriteria decision aid. Springer-Verlag.

Brans J.P., Vinke Ph., Mareschal B., 1986. How to select and how to rank projects: The PROMETHEE method. European Journal of Operational Research 24: 228-238

**Combining participatory processes and multicriteria evaluation**

In this part, we will review some participatory techniques and, if possible, implement them in the case study carry out by the group.

References

Dente B., Fareri P., Ligteringen J., 1998. A theoretical framework for case study analysis. In B. Dente et at. (eds.), The Waste and the Backyard, 197-223. Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Nazarea V., Rhoades R., Bontoyan E., Flora G., 1998. Defining indicators which make sense to local people: Intra-cultural variatiions in perceptions of natural resources. Human Organization 57 (2).

Garmendia E., Gamboa G., 2012. Weighting social preferences in participatory multi-criteria evaluations: A case study on sustainable natural resource management. Ecological Economics 84. 110–120.

**Case study**

In the village of Santa Pau, a number of small organic vegetable farms have sprung up in recent years. The majority of producers offer baskets of vegetables, but production exceeds demand and producers have come together to find market for their products. Small farmers are planning to organize a weekly organic vegetable market, which has generated different views on the subject. Some actors in the village support the idea of a weekly market, and for others it raises certain questions.

The village is small and very touristy on weekends. It is known by its natural environment and tranquility. Some actors see the market as an opportunity to boost economic development and others see the market as an affectation on quietness.

There are 3 restaurants and 3 bars, one hostel and some rural tourism houses. As well, there are 2 grocery stores and 2 souvenir shops.

The city council would like to promote a participatory process to define and evaluate some alternatives to the weekly market. It has been decided to carry out a social multicriteria evaluation process. To do so, it has contracted a cooperative of social dynamization to carry out the process, which has made a call for a public meeting to define and validate the participatory process.

In the first call, the following social actors have been called:

- Hotels and restaurants

- Commerce association (souvenirs and grocery stores)

- Neighbors association

- City council

- Small organic farmers

- Craft association

- Environmental group

**Assignment**

Groups of 5 have to choose one of the roles mentioned above (it is fine if additional groups, with different roles, are created).

Each group will have to perform the following activities along the course:

* Define the objectives of the group (with regard the proposal of establishing a weekly market)
* Propose alternatives to the organic vegetable market
* Define attributes and indicators to evaluate the alternatives
* Evaluate the alternatives from the point of view of actors, to identify potential coalitions with other actors